

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 011081

NODIS

FOR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOL TAIPEI 0313 SENT ACTION SECSTATE JAN 16, 1978 REPEATED
TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 0313

NODIS

FOR EA HOLBROOKE AND EA/ROC FELDMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PGOV, TW

SUBJECT: MILITARY REDUCTIONS AND ARMS REQUESTS

1. TWO SIGNIFICANT DECISIONS ARE NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION
IN WASHINGTON: THE FIRST, A SUBSTANTIAL FURTHER REDUCTION
OF U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL ON TAIWAN BY MID-1978, AND THE
SECOND, DISPOSITION OF A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF OUTSTANDING
GROC REQUESTS FOR PURCHASES OF WEAPONS SYSTEMS, EQUIPMENT,
ETC. AND FOR INFORMATION ON SUCH MATTERS.

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2. ASSUMING THESE DECISIONS ARE MADE, I URGE THAT I BE
AUTHORIZED TO COMMUNICATE THEM PROMPTLY TO THE APPROPRIATE
OFFICIALS IN THE GROC AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT
OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE CERTAIN POINTS. IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE
FOR THE GROC TO LEARN OF USG DECISIONS THROUGH THE PRESS OR
OTHERWISE CASUALLY AND THIS WOULD ALSO DEPRIVE US OF AN
OPPORTUNITY TO USE THIS NEWS FOR SOME CONSTRUCTIVE PURPOSE.

3. AS REGARDS THE SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION OF U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL ON TAIWAN, THE IMPORTANT POINT OF COURSE IS NOT THE PRECISE NUMBERS BUT TO PUT THIS BEFORE THE GROC AS A FURTHER IMPLEMENATION OF OUR UNDERTAKING (IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE) TO "PROGRESSIVELY REDUCE (US) FORCES AND MILITARY INSTALLATIONS ON TAIWAN AS THE TENSION IN THE AREA DIMINISHES." THE GROC WILL NOT MISS THE ADDED IMPLICATION OF THIS EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS TOWARD "THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL U.S. FORCES AND MILITARY INSTALLATIONS FROM TAIWAN" AS A FURTHER MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF NORMALIZATION.

4. I WOULD THEN TELL THEM OF THE DECISIONS ON WEAPONS SYSTEMS, ETC., ADDING THAT OUR RESPONSE TO THE GROC REQUESTS IS EVIDENCE OF OUR CONTINUING INTENTION TO ENABLE TAIWAN TO MAINTAIN ITS ARMED FORCES AS A DETERRENT TO MILITARY ATTACK. I FURTHER RECOMMEND THAT I BE AUTHORIZED TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY ALSO TO TELL THE GROC THAT WE INTEND, EVEN AFTER NORMALIZATION IS ACCOMPLISHED, TO PERMIT TAIWAN TO CONTINUE TO BE SUPPLIED WITH MINIMUM ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS TO MAINTAIN THE ARMED FORCES OF TAIWAN AS A CREDIBLE DETERRENT AGAINST ATTACK.

5. I REALIZE THAT SUCH A COMMUNICATION TO THE GROC AT THIS TIME WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT STEP AND THAT IT INVOLVES MATTERS ON WHICH WE DO NOT YET HAVE ANY CLEAR UNDERSTANDING
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WITH THE PRC. I HAVE IN MIND HOWEVER THE VIEW EXPRESSED AND GENERALLY SUPPORTED AT THE RECENT HONG KONG CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING THAT ON THIS AND OTHER MATTERS THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO WORK OUT AND IMPLEMENT ITS ARRANGEMENTS FOR NORMALIZATION WHICH RELATE TO TAIWAN WITHOUT SEEKING SPECIFIC PRC CONCURRENCE, ALTHOUGH TAKING ADEQUATE ACCOUNT OF WHAT WE KNOW TO BE THE PRC POSITION. THIS RESTS ON THE JUDGEMENT THAT, WHILE PEKING WOULD NOT FEEL ABLE TO GIVE ITS PRIOR CONCURRENCE TO CEETAIN ACTIONS, OUR TAKING SUCH ACTIONS WOULD NOT CAUSE PEKING TO TEFUSE TO DO WHATEVER WAS REQUIRED ON ITS SIDE TO ACHIEVE NORMALIZATION WITH US. AS FAR AS RELATIONS WITH THE GROC ARE CONCERNED OUR COMMUNICATING SUCH A POSITION ABOUT WEAPONS SUPPLY AT THIS TIME WOULD PROVIDE FURTHER EVIDENCE OF OUR CONTINUING INTENTION TO CARRY THROUGH WITH NORMALIZATION IN DUE COURSE BUT WOULD ALSO REASSURE THEM THAT NORMALIZATION WOULD TAKE PLACE WITH ADEQUATE PROVISION BEING MADE TO MEET ONE OF THEIR MOST IMOORTANT CONCERNS. UNGER UNQUOTE
CHRISTOPHER

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